LOCALWERX

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Welcome To LocalWerx Magazine

Thanks for checking out our online marketing resource guide for small business. Each month we cover topics that resonate with local businesses just like yours.

Our goal is simple. We want to enable you to do big things online, and it all starts by breaking down the complexities of marketing your business online.

It doesn't matter if you're just starting out, or an established business owner in your local community, you can always benefit from increasing your brand's visibility online.

To your success,
Karen Estrin

BROUGHT TO YOU BY

LocalWerx is the leading small business marketing service in the Phoenix area. We help small businesses build "marketing machine" to connect with more customers online.

If you want to build your business, you need to market, it's that simple. But you can lose thousands of dollars if you don't know what you are doing. So we urge you to take action with some of the strategies we recommend.

For a more "hands off" approach, we offer affordable solutions that can deliver results. We hope you enjoy this issue of LocalWerx Magazine and feel free to reach out to us anytime.

Google's
AI Overviews Are
Stealing Your Clicks

HERE'S HOW TO FIGHT BACK

It's not your imagination — your website traffic may be shrinking even though your rankings haven't changed.

Calls and contact form submissions might feel like they've slowed down. And if you've been paying attention to your Google Business Profile insights, you may have noticed a dip in the number of actions people are taking.

There's a reason for this. It's called AI Overviews, and Google has quietly rolled it out as part of its latest evolution in how search works. For local business owners, this shift is bigger than any algorithm update in recent memory — and it's already changing how potential customers find and choose local providers.

Let's break it down and show you exactly what you need to do to stay visible (and stay profitable) in the age of AI search.
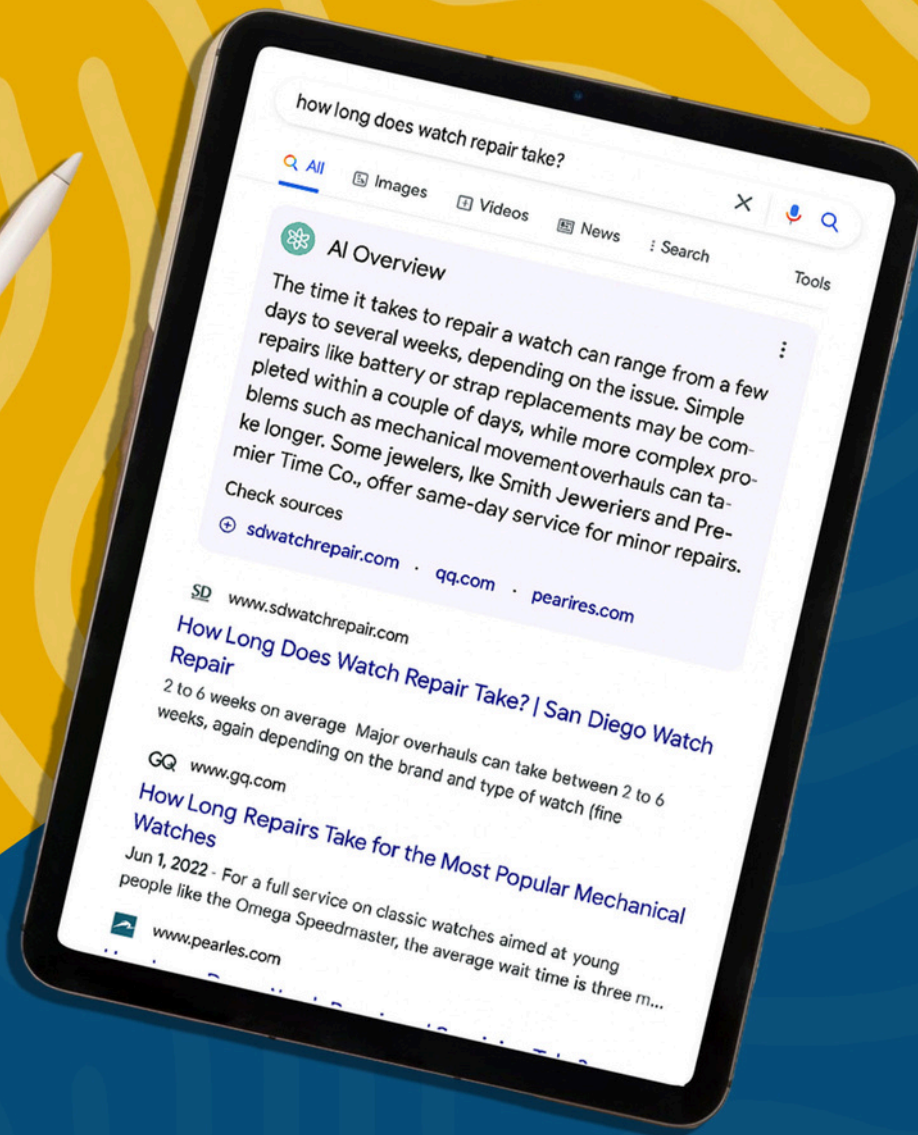
What Are AI Overviews?

AI Overviews are the new top-of-page summaries that Google is now generating for many search results.

Instead of showing a list of links, Google uses artificial intelligence to read mul- tiple websites, understand the content, and generate a short answer to the searcher's question — right on the results page.

These overviews are written by Google's generative AI models, not copied from any one site. And they're not optional. Google is choosing when to show them, how they're written, and what sources are referenced — if any.

In many cases, the AI-generated response shows up before any website links, Google Ads, or even the local map pack.

So while you may technically "rank" for a keyword, it doesn't matter if the user never scrolls past the AI answer. This is known as a zero-click search, and it's becoming the default.

Why This Matters for Local Businesses

Let's say someone searches:

"How fast can a plumber fix a leaking pipe?"

In the past, they'd get blog posts, maybe a local plumber's FAQ, or Quora threads.

Now, with AI Overviews in play, Google might respond with something like:

"A licensed plumber can typically fix a leaking pipe within an hour. Look for providers that offer 24/7 service and have strong reviews for emergency response. Options may vary by area."

This type of overview doesn't list local businesses based on proximity — but it may reference businesses whose content or reviews mention emergency response, 24/7 availability, or pipe repair speed.

That early visibility can shape the buyer's impression — before they ever search "plumber near me."

The bottom line?

Google is no longer just showing results — it's making recommendations.

And if your business isn't part of the recommendation, you're invisible.

How Google Decides What to Include

Unlike traditional SEO, where ranking factors were mostly understood (links, content, speed, relevance), AI Overviews rely on semantic understanding — meaning Google's AI is trying to "understand" the best answer, not just reward keyword matching.

Here's what it's pulling from:

- ☑ Your Google Business Profile, especially services, categories, and reviews
- ☑ Trusted third-party directories like Yelp, Angi, BBB, and niche sites
- ☑ High-quality blog content, how-to articles, and service guides
- ☑ Aggregated content across forums, Reddit, and FAQ-style posts

If your business hasn't been mentioned across these places — or your website is thin on helpful content — you may not make the cut.

And even worse: Google rarely links to your site in the overview. That means less traffic, fewer clicks, and fewer leads — unless you adapt.

What Local Businesses Need to Do Now

This shift doesn't mean you're out of the game — it just means you have to optimize differently.

1. STRENGTHEN YOUR GBP (GOOGLE BUSINESS PROFILE)

Every word in your business profile matters more now. Update your services, write a detailed business description, and make sure your primary category is spot on.

Add more photos. Post updates weekly. AI Overviews often use your GBP as a source of factual data.

2. ENCOURAGE REVIEW CONTENT THATMENTIONSYOUR SERVICES

The AI scans reviews for patterns. If people say "emergency plumber" or "great for water heater replacement," those keywords boost your chances of being summarized accurately. Ask for reviews that naturally include the service you provided — not just "great job."

3. GET CITED IN LOCAL AND NICHE DIRECTORIES

It's not just about backlinks anymore — it's about citations. Make sure your NAP (Name, Address, Phone) is consistent across sites like Yelp, Angi, BBB, Chamber of Commerce pages, and industry-specific directories.

AI Overviews treat these as trusted signals.

4. ADD REAL CONTENT TO YOUR WEBSITE

Thin service pages don't cut it anymore. Write detailed FAQs, blog posts, and how-to guides specific to your niche. Example: A roofer can write "How to tell if your shingles need replacing after a storm." A dentist might post "How often should you really get a deep cleaning?" This type of content is more likely to be summarized and referenced by Google's AI.

5. DON'T IGNORE VIDEO

Google's AI systems are increasingly analyzing video content, especially YouTube. A simple explainer video titled "What to Do If Your AC Stops Working" could get pulled into AI responses. Add a transcript, a title with intent, and link back to your site.

A Quick Reality Check:
Not Every Search Triggers an AI Overview

Let's be clear: If someone types "dentist near me" or "best dog groomer in [city]," AI Overviews typically don't appear. You'll still see the map pack, local listings, and sometimes ads — just like before.

But when someone searches a question — like:

"Is microneedling safe for sensitive skin?"
"How long does HVAC installation take?"

Google may generate an AI Overview. And if it names businesses (or draws from your site, GBP, or reviews), you could be the one influencing that early-stage buyer.

So while AI Overviews won't replace your local SEO efforts, they're already changing how buyers start the journey — and that's where smart businesses want to be visible.

Will This Replace Traditional SEO?

Not entirely — but it's absolutely shifting where the attention goes. Think of it like this:

- ☑ SEO gets you on the page.
- ☑ AI Overviews decide if you get seen.

The goal now isn't just to rank — it's to get referenced.

That means your strategy needs to evolve from "optimize for keywords" to "optimize for helpfulness, relevance, and context." Google is betting its future on AI-powered answers. And if your business doesn't adapt, you'll be left behind.

## Final Thought

The rise of AI Overviews is the most disruptive change to local search in years — but it's also an opportunity. The businesses that take this seriously now will be the ones dominating the conversation when customers ask Google for help.

If you're already showing up in the map pack, you've got a head start. Now it's time to make sure Google's AI sees you as the best answer too.

Your Next Hire Might Be an AI Agent:

HOW LOCAL BUSINESSES ARE AUTOMATING CUSTOMER SERVICE IN 2025
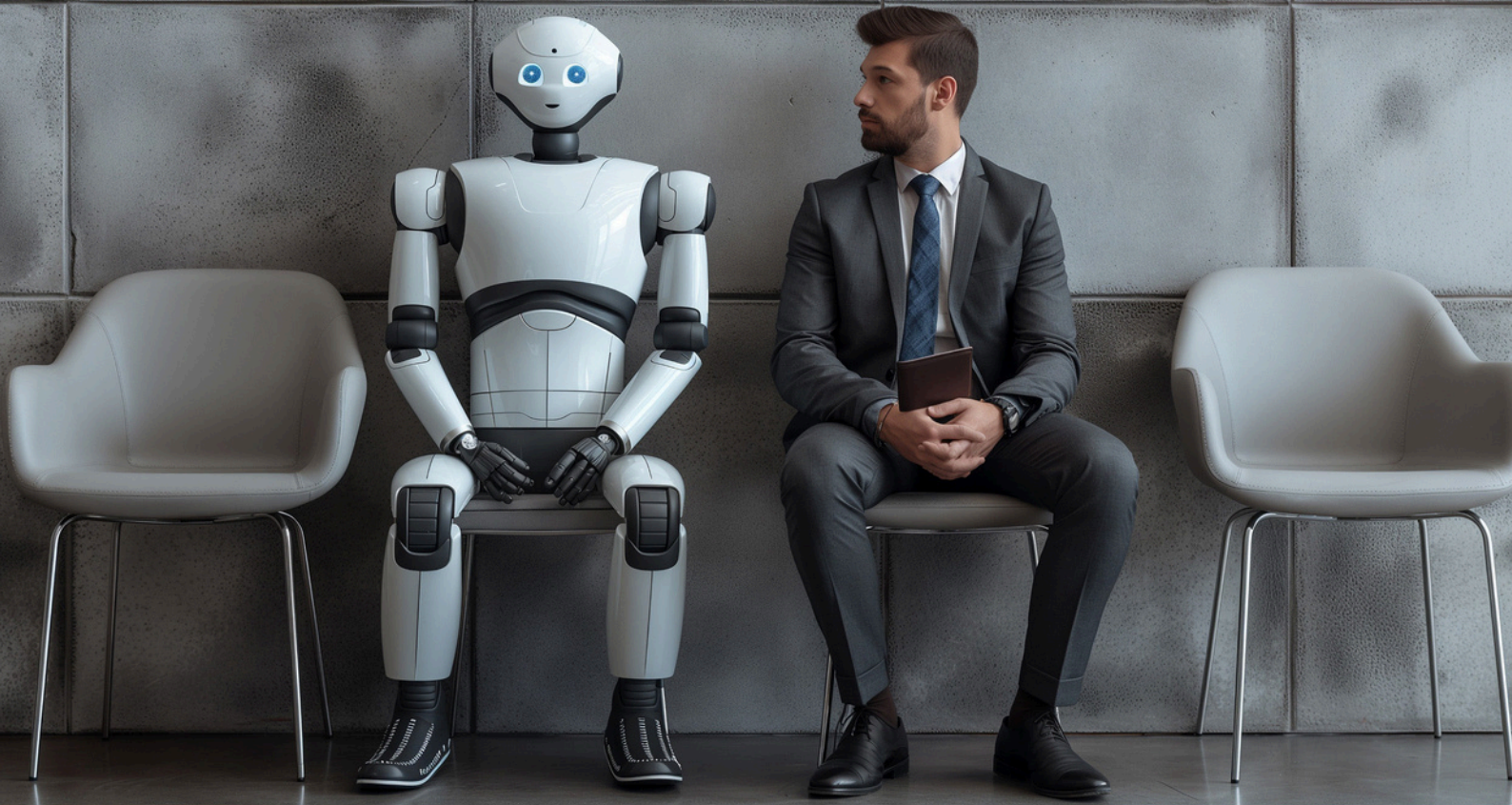
There's a new employee quietly taking over phone lines, websites, and even front desk duties across local businesses — but it doesn't ask for vacation days, overtime, or even coffee.

It's not a person.

It's not outsourced.

It's AI.

Local business owners — once hesitant to adopt automation — are now embracing a new wave of AI-powered customer service agents that work 24/7, never forget a script, and actually improve over time. And they're not just being used by tech-savvy franchises or national brands. We're talking about independent local business owners who figured out how to automate the parts of their business they used to lose time, money, and patience over.

Here's how it works — and how smart businesses are already putting it to work.

What Is an AI Agent?

An AI agent is more than just a chatbot. It's an intelligent system that can understand context, respond naturally, and perform real tasks like answering phones, booking appointments, answering FAQs, qualifying leads, and even taking payments.

These agents are trained on real business data:

– Operating hours
– Pricing
– Services
– Booking rules
– And even tone of voice

Once trained, they act like a customer service rep — one that never sleeps, never misses a message, and never says "I'll have to check on that and call you back."

Why It's Exploding in 2025

There are two main reasons:

1. The tech finally caught up. Tools like OpenAI's GPT-based voice models and platforms like ElevenLabs, Air.ai, and Vapi now offer real-time, natural conversation experiences that feel human.

2. Local customers expect it. People want answers now — and if you can't respond instantly, your competitor (or their AI agent) will.

What was once a novelty is now a necessity.

Real Examples: AI in Action (That You Haven't Seen Before)

Here are real-world, under-the-radar examples of local businesses deploying AI agents in ways that are saving time, capturing more leads, and delivering better customer experiences:

Donut Shop: *"AI That Handles the Rush"* ❯

A gourmet donut café in Portland, Maine uses an AI voice assistant to field calls during the morning rush — when staff are busy filling orders and pouring coffee.

It handles calls like:

"What's today's flavor lineup?"
"Do you have gluten-free options?"
"Can I pre-order a dozen crullers for Friday?"

The AI gives accurate answers, takes pickup orders, and even reminds customers via text an hour before pickup. The owner said:
"It's like having a second cashier on the phone — but one that doesn't get flustered."

Music Schools: *"AI for Scheduling Lessons"* ❯

A local music school in Tempe, AZ rolled out a chatbot that fields inquiries for instrument lessons. Instead of staff going back and forth with availability and pricing, the AI handles:

– Instrument selection
– Student age
– Skill level
– Preferred times

It then checks instructor calendars, matches fit, and sends a confirmation email. The human team just gets the booking notification.

Car Detailing Studio: *"AI + Prequalification Script"* 》

A mobile auto detailer in Florida uses a custom-trained phone AI that runs a pre-qualifying script:

"What kind of vehicle? Do you have pet hair or stains? When would you like the service?"

It then checks the tech's availability, quotes a ballpark, and locks in the appointment — all before the owner even touches the phone.

They've reduced no-shows and closed more premium packages with almost no back-and-forth.

Local Law Firm: *"Lead Vetting Without Losing Trust"* 》

A small family law practice in Austin, TX uses a custom voice AI to screen inquiries before passing them to a real attorney. It asks:

"Are you looking for help with divorce, custody, or something else?"
"Is there a court date already scheduled?"
"Are you currently working with another lawyer?"

The AI collects essential case info and politely explains next steps — all while logging the conversation and alerting the intake team with lead priority flags.

The firm's managing partner said:

"We're still hands-on with every client, but this lets us respond within minutes, not hours — and we're wasting less time on tire-kickers."

Wellness Studio: *"AI-Managed Class Waitlists"*

A yoga and recovery studio in Colorado added an AI chat assistant that handles class registration, cancellations, and even waitlist follow-ups.

If someone cancels, the bot auto-texts the next person in line — filling more spots and reducing empty mats.

The owner said:

"It's like having a studio manager who works overnight. It saves hours of admin every week."

Can You Trust AI to Represent Your Business?

This is the biggest sticking point — and it's valid. Here's how smart business owners are making it work:

– They train the AI using their own scripts, FAQs, and tone of voice
– They start by handling low-risk interactions (FAQs, hours, booking) before expanding
– They monitor the first 30–50 conversations and adjust until it feels just right

And most importantly — they position it honestly:

"You're speaking with our automated assistant. I'm here to help."

No fake personas. No gimmicks. Just clarity, value, and speed.
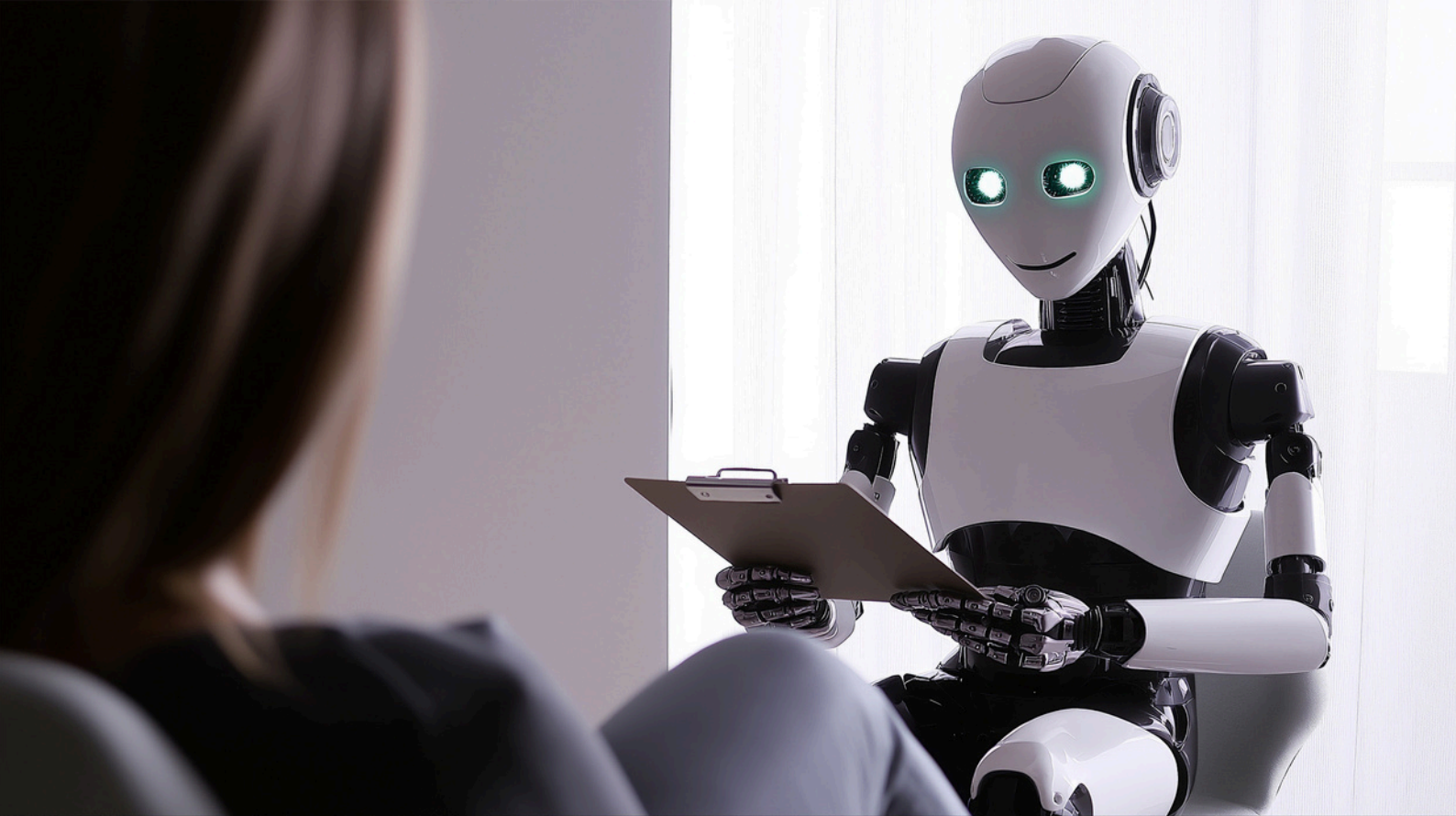
What You Can Automate Right Now (Without Breaking Things)

Even if you're skeptical or not ready to hand over customer contact to AI just yet, here's where most local businesses start:

– Missed call response: AI answers, collects details, and texts you a lead summary
– Appointment requests: Chatbots or phone agents that check calendar blocks
– Quote prequalification: AI runs a short script before you even respond
– FAQ handling: Hours, services, payment methods, directions
– Lead nurturing: Follow-up messages when customers ghost you

These aren't futuristic — they're already being used daily by business owners who've realized AI is a better assistant than their own voicemail box.

Final Thoughts

The idea of "hiring AI" used to sound ridiculous. But now? It's a competitive advantage.

The local businesses embracing it are saving time, earning more, and showing up for their customers — even when they're off the clock.

Because in 2025, your next hire might not need a desk or a paycheck. It might just need a prompt and a voice.

The Review Whisperer:
HOW TO GET MORE
5-STARS
WITHOUT
BEGGING
or
BRIBING

You already know reviews are critical. What you might not know is that asking for them the way most businesses do is actually hurting your results.

Begging? Awkward.

Bribing? Risky (and against most platform policies).

Ignoring? That's how you lose to the guy down the street with 48 fresh 5-stars and a lower rating.

But what if you could get more (and better) reviews by doing less asking and more noticing? That's where the Review Whisperer approach comes in.

It's not about gimmicks. It's about timing, empathy, and creating micro-moments that make customers want to say something good.

Here's how to pull in the kind of reviews that actually move the needle for your business — without sounding desperate.

Step 1: Stop Treating Reviews Like a Transaction

If your "review strategy" is handing someone a card and saying "If you leave us 5 stars, we'll give you 10% off," stop.

Customers don't respond to desperate. And when you frame it like a transaction, it feels like a chore — or worse, a scam.

The better approach? Tap into authentic customer moments. You want to ask when the customer's brain is already shouting "That was awesome."

People write reviews for the same reason they tell friends about a great meal or an amazing deal — because the experience sticks.

Your job is to guide the timing so they capture it, not forget it.

Step 2: Find the "Wow Moment" — and Strike Then

Every business has at least one of these moments — most just aren't paying attention.

For a salon, it's when the client turns to the mirror and lights up.
For a mechanic, it's when the customer hears their car fire up without that mystery clunk.
For a chiropractor, it's when someone stands up and says "Wow, I feel better already."
For a med spa, it might be when they see a before-and-after photo side by side.

That's your cue. Not five hours later via email. Not two days later with a canned text.
Right there. In person or through automation, reinforce the experience and open the door.

Say something like:

"I'm so glad we got that taken care of — if you're open to it, would you mind sharing that in a quick review? That's what helps people find us."

No pressure. No pitch. Just riding the emotional wave.

If you're not seeing these moments, ask your team what customers smile about most — and start there.

Step 3: **Make It Freakin' Easy**

Don't bury your review link in a receipt footer. Don't ask people to "search for us on Google." Give them a direct path, and only one step to take.

- ⭐ Use a QR code at the counter
- ⭐ Use tap cards at checkout
- ⭐ Use text follow-ups that say:

"Glad you had a great visit! If you've got 30 seconds, this link means the world to us: [review link]"

Why it matters:

Every extra click, scroll, or awkward search kills your momentum.

If someone needs to "figure it out," they won't — even if they meant to.

Pro Tip: Tools like NiceJob, Whitespark, or your CRM (GoHighLevel, Podium, etc.) can automate the ask — and even personalize the message — without making it feel robotic.
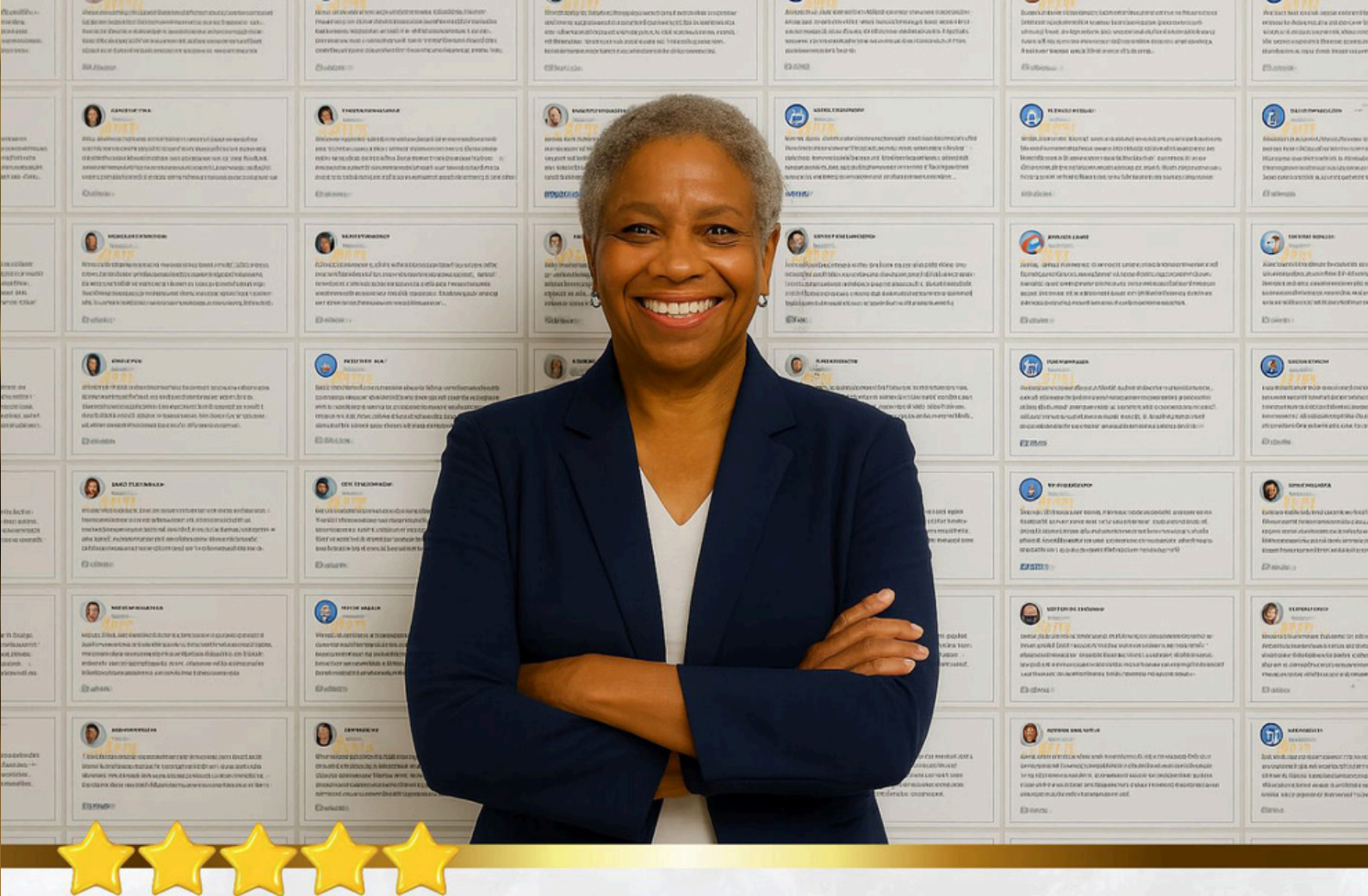
Step 4: Don't Just Ask — Celebrate

Here's what most local businesses miss: the ask is only part of the game.

You also want to build review momentum.

When someone leaves a review, screenshot it. Post it on your wall. Share it on Instagram. Reply with gratitude.

Better yet — say this:

"Thanks for sharing that! People read every one of these, and your words help more than you know."

Let people see that real humans are reading, caring, and appreciating what's shared.

Even better: when potential customers see others being celebrated, it subtly primes them to follow suit when their time comes.

Some businesses even post signs near the register like:

"Seen us on Google? Our latest 5-star came in this morning!"

It creates energy — and social proof.

Want consistent reviews without constantly chasing them?

Use automatic triggers tied to real-world milestones:

- ⭐ Appointment completed
- ⭐ Invoice paid Order
- ⭐ marked "Delivered"

- ⭐ Testimonial recorded
- ⭐ Birthday/anniversary of becoming a customer

Tie each to a simple message:

"Thanks again for coming in today — here's a quick link in case you wanted to share your experience: [link]"

These can go out via email or SMS — just don't wait too long. The closer the ask is to the moment of impact, the higher the success rate.

Be Worth Reviewing (Then Let It Show)

The businesses thatwinreviewsaren't always the cheapest,fastest,or flashiest.

They're the ones that consistently create little moments worth remembering — and then make it effortless to share them.
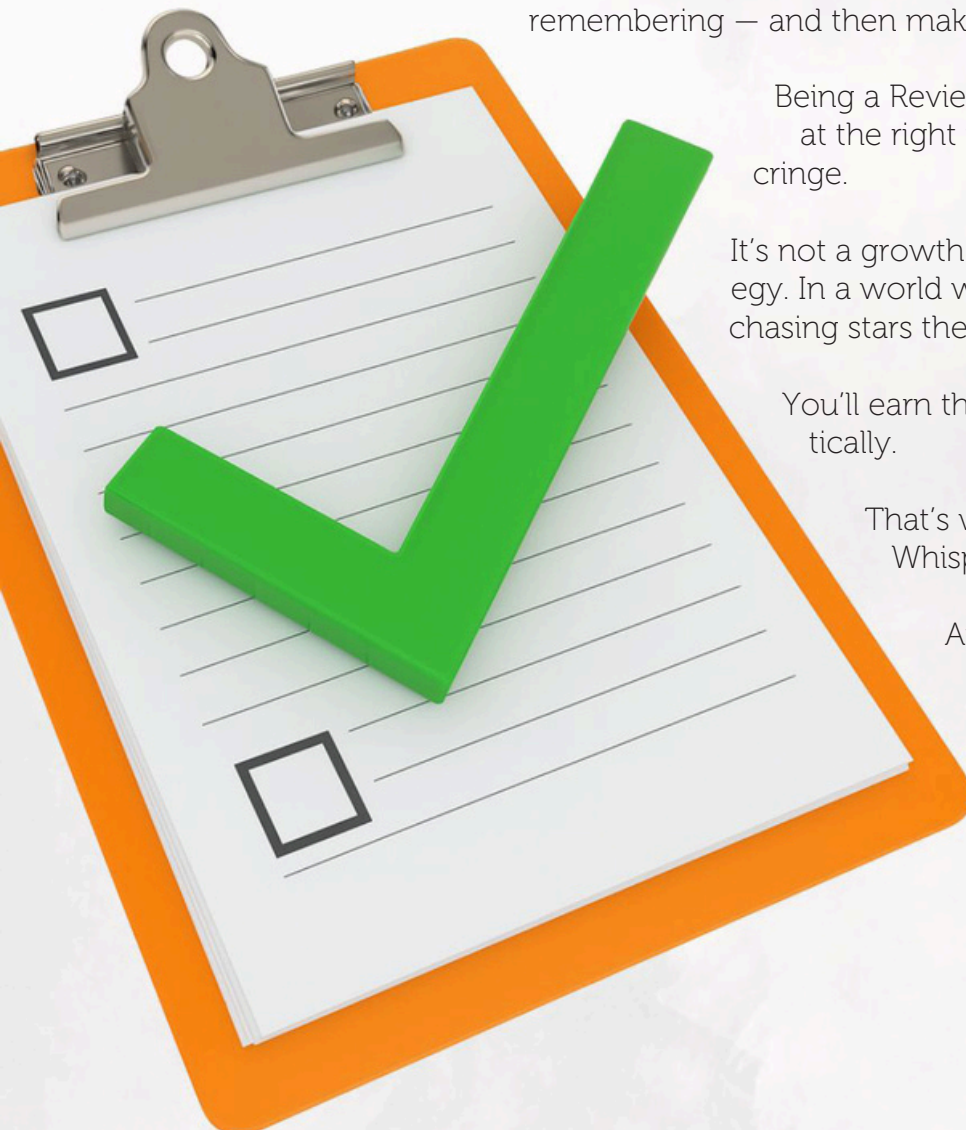
Being a Review Whisperer means showing up at the right time, in the right way, with zero cringe.

It's not a growth hack — it's an experience strategy. In a world where your competitors are still chasing stars the old-fashioned way...

You'll earn them. Naturally. Reliably. Authentically.

That's what makes you a Review Whisperer.

And that's what builds an unstoppable reputation.

QR CODES AREN'T
DEAD
YOU'RE JUST USING THEM
WRONG

QR codes are like fax machines — ancient tech that somehow refuses to die.

But here's the truth:

QR codes aren't outdated... most businesses just suck at using them.

If you've been slapping a QR code on a flyer and calling it "modern marketing," this one's for you.

Because when done right, QR codes can trigger real action — reviews, bookings, sales — on the spot.

No apps, no convincing. Just scan and go.

Let's break down what's wrong with most QR code use today... and how to turn them into conversion machines.

WHAT MOST LOCAL BUSINESSES GET WRONG

Let'sbereal.The average QRcode setuplookslikethis:

A random square slapped on a business card or receipt	A link that goes to your home-page (yawn)
No context around why someone should scan it	Or worse… a broken link or expired promotion

You've got one shot when someone points their phone at that code.

And if what pops up doesn't deliver value or make sense right now… they're not scanning again.

THE RIGHT WAY: START WITH A PURPOSE, NOT A SQUARE

Before you generate a QR code, ask yourself: **What's the one specific action I want this person to take?**

Then reverse-engineereverything around that. Here are high-converting use cases that actually drive results:

Review request page - Send them straight to your Google review link — no clicks, no confusion.

Instant rebooking - Open your schedul-ing tool with their name already filled in.

Special offer opt-in - Link to a landing page with a one-time promo + email capture form.

Feedback survey - Great for after-service moments or on printed receipts.

Menu or service list (with buttons!) - Use inter-active PDFs or mobile-first pages — not a JPEG.

You're not just giving them a link. You're giv-**ing them clarity + convenience.**

Take 10% off
your next visit
scan to unlock
your code

USE PLACEMENT THAT MAKES SENSE IN THE MOMENT

Contextis everything.

A QR code by the exit door isn't the same as one on a treatment room mirror.

Matchyour placement to the mindset of your customer at that exact second.
Here's what that looks like in the real world:

Reception counter: "We'd love your feedback — scan this to leave a quick review."

Retailcheckout: "Sign up now and earn reward points."

Postcard or mailer: "This code's just for you — scan to claim your local VIP deal."

Table tent or window cling: "Take 10% off your next visit — scan to unlock your code."

Bathroom mirror at a salon or spa: "Love your look? Grab a selfie + tag us. Scan to see client photos!"

Let the physical experience guide the digital one.

WHAT THE PAGE SHOULD LOOK LIKE AFTER THE SCAN

Let's say someone scans your QR code. Now what?

Your page needs to:

▓ Load instantly on mobile
▓ Match the message from the QR context
▓ Require zero thinking
▓ Have ONE clear call to action

If it's cluttered, slow, or generic — you just lost the lead.

Then reverse-engineer everything around that.

Here are high-converting use cases that actually drive results:

📖 Carrd   ⭘ ConvertKit

☰ Taplink   ◆ Leadpages

You're not just giving them a link. You're giving them clarity + convenience.

BONUS POWER MOVES

Want to take QR codes from "meh" to "money"? Try these advanced tactics:

Dynamic QR Codes
Use platforms like QR.io or Beaconstac to create editable QR codes — so you can change the destination later without reprinting anything.

Trackable Links
Use Bit.ly or UTM parameters to track how many scans turn into leads, appointments, or purchases.

TRIGGER AUTOMATIONS
Pair your QR page with a lead capture that starts an SMS or email sequence via tools like GoHighLevel, ActiveCampaign, or Mailchimp.

Add a Chatbot
Send them to a page where a chatbot says:

"Thanks for stopping by — want help booking your next visit?"

That's how you turn a scan into a sale.

COMMON MISTAKES TO AVOID

Let'ssave you some headaches.

⚠ Don't use tiny QR codes people can't scan from arm's length

⚠ Don't send to your homepage unless it's laser-focused

⚠ Don't forget a call-to-action near the code (e.g. "Scan to..." is key)

⚠ Don't hide the code in clutter — give it space to breathe

⚠ Don't link to slow-loading pages (or any thing with popups)

REAL EXAMPLE: HOW A MED SPA GOT 84 REVIEWS IN 3 WEEKS

One Clicks Magazine subscriber ran a "Review & Win" campaign using this setup:

1. Table tent with QR code that said:

 "Tell us what you loved — be entered to win a $100 gift card!"

2. Code went straight to their Google review page

3. Every 7 days, they picked a winner from the list of new reviews

4. Posted winners on social — and reviews kept flowing in

All tracked. All automated. All from one simple little code.

QR ISN'T DEAD – IT'S JUST BEEN MISUSED

QR codes don't work because they're trendy. They work when the moment, the message, and the mobile experience all line up.

Used right, they're a frictionless, fast, and totally free way to generate:

More reviews More repeat bookings More email/SMS leads More revenue

So don't write them off. Write them better.

TIRED OF GUESSING WHY THE PHONE'S NOT RINGING?

Let's be real.

Local marketing's changed.

Google's changed. Your competitors? They've probably changed too.

If your business is still relying on the same outdated tactics from 2019... you're already behind. Here's what we do:

- ➤ Get you found on Google(and make sure your listing doesn't suck)
- ➤ Fix the invisible stuff killingyour rankings
- ➤ Turn your website into alead machine — not a digital brochure
- ➤ Set up real follow-up systems so hot leads don't ghost you
- ➤ Show you what's working(and what's not) — with proof

Youdon't need "more marketing."
You need better execution.

We work with serious localbusinesses that are ready to grow — not just survive.

IF THAT'S YOU, LET'S TALK.

Connect with us today. 602-699-4311 | LocalWerx.com